

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants propose amending Fig. 5 to correct a minor typographical error; cancel claims 1, 2, 18-22, and 24-27, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof; propose rewriting claims 17 and 23 in independent form; and propose amending claims 16 and 17 to correct minor errors.

In the Final Office Action (“FOA”), the Examiner indicated that claims 9, 10, and 16 are allowed and objected to claims 17 and 23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants propose rewriting claims 17 and 23 in independent form including all the elements of claims 1 and 22, respectively. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 17 and 23 are in condition for allowance.

Further, the Examiner objected to the drawings; objected to claims 16 and 17 as containing informalities; rejected claims 1, 2, 18, 19, 22, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kamakura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,172,657 (“*Kamakura*”) in view of Yoshigahara, U.S. Patent No. 6,570,566 (“*Yoshigahara*”); and rejected claims 20, 21, 26, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Kamakura* in view of *Yoshigahara*, and further in view of Ruppert et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,236,969 (“*Ruppert*”). Applicants address these objections and rejections as set forth below.

I. Response to Objections

The Examiner objected to Fig. 5 for containing an incorrect word. In response, Applicants propose amending Fig. 5 to correct this minor typographical error. Thus, Applicants request that the Examiner approve the amendment to Fig. 5 and withdraw the objection.

Further, the Examiner objected to the phrase “constituting a computer system together with a computer” in claim 16. Applicants propose amending claim 16 to change this phrase to

“in communication with a computer.” Applicants submit that this amendment will overcome the Examiner’s objection. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner enter this amendment and withdraw the objection to claim 16.

II. Response to Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 18, 19, 22, 24, and 25 under section 103(a) are unpatentable over *Kamakura* in view of *Yoshigahara* and rejected claims 20, 21, 26, and 27 under section 103(a) as unpatentable over *Kamakura* in view of *Yoshigahara*, and further in view of *Ruppert*. Applicants have canceled claims 1, 2, 18-22, and 24-27, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. Thus, upon entry of this amendment, the rejections of claims 1, 2, 18-22, and 24-27 under section 103(a) will be rendered moot.

III. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 9, 10, 16, 17, and 23 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendments of claims 16 and 17 and the proposed rewriting of claims 17 and 23 do not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Finally, Applicants submit that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that this claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicants therefore request the entry of this Amendment, the

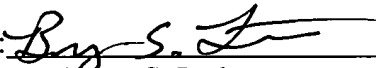
Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: 
Bryan S. Latham
Reg. No. 49,085